



Press Distribution Review Panel Annual Report 2020

Executive summary

During 2020 we have seen a significant reduction in the number of Stage 2 and 3 complaints compared to previous years. It is generally believed that the CV-19 pandemic and consequent lockdowns have caused enormous distractions to retailer businesses, significantly impacting the complaints process.

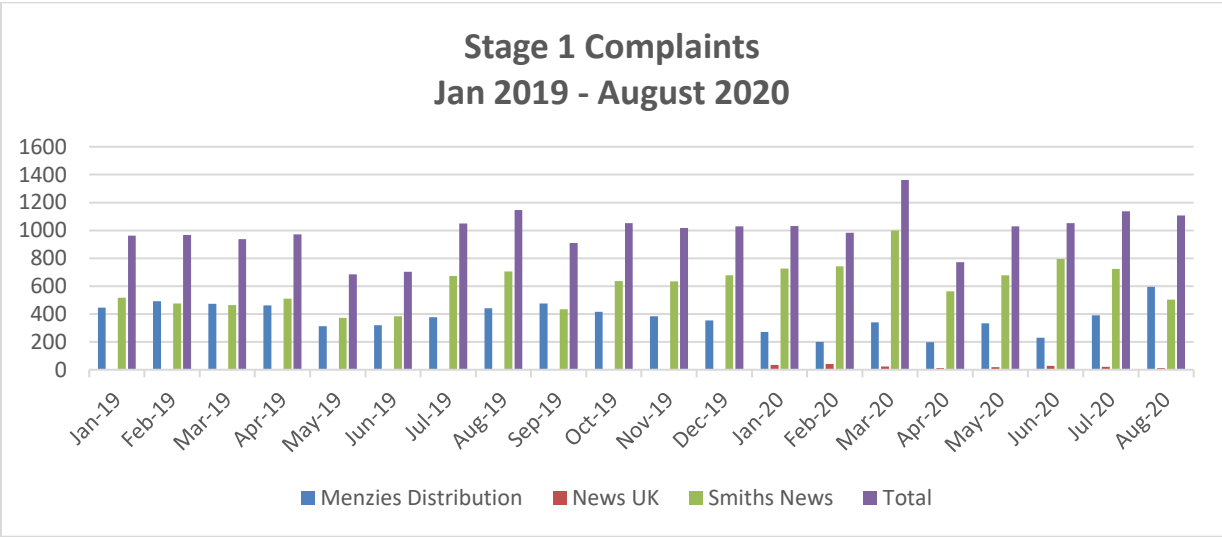
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Wholesale houses originating complaints	40	34	47	40	27
Number of completed Stage 2 forms	167	289	283	153	54
Number of Stage 2 Breaches	266	324	284	162	57
Number of complaints escalated to Stage 3	9	22	41	13	3

The reduction in the number of wholesale houses originating complaints is likely in part to be a consequence of on-going network reduction. As in previous years most complaints relate to Delivery timeliness (40.4%), however Invoicing (21.1%) has generated a significant proportion of breaches in 2020.

Whilst Smiths News have most Stage 2 complaints (68%), it is noted that this is to some extent a consequence of differences in approach between the larger wholesalers in resolving Stage 1 complaints.

Whilst all wholesalers have provided statistics on all complaints received prior to any escalation to Stage 2, changes in reporting from September 2020 has resulted in a significant inconsistency in outputs.

The general view of the PDRP is that greater transparency of all retailer complaints prior to any formal escalation provides useful insight into the performance of the Newspaper and Magazine supply chain. It is hoped that an agreed reporting output can be agreed for inclusion in future reports. A summary of all pre-Stage 2 complaints reported to August 2020 is charted below.



The major wholesalers continue to invest in online self-management solutions enabling retailers to quickly resolve a wide range of queries at an early stage.

Earlier annual reports highlighted the overall level of supply chain activity that occurs between wholesalers and retailers, and the number of potential instances that could lead to a service failure was around 400 million in the year. During 2020 whilst there were fewer products distributed and changes to the retailer base which would reduce the potential instances of service failure; these were not felt to be significant, therefore the original data was **not** refreshed. Whilst retailer frustrations do remain, it should be recognised the current level of service failures, including Stage 1 volumes, as a proportion of total supply chain activity, remains low.

The Press Distribution Charter is currently under review within the PDF, and a new Charter is expected to be released during Spring 2020. The new Charter will also include a new and simplified complaints process and will benefit from extensive communication and publicity at the time of launch.

Performance (Summary) data is summarised from page 3 of this report. and includes history of breaches by standard, association and timeliness. Details of breaches by wholesale location are in Appendix 1.

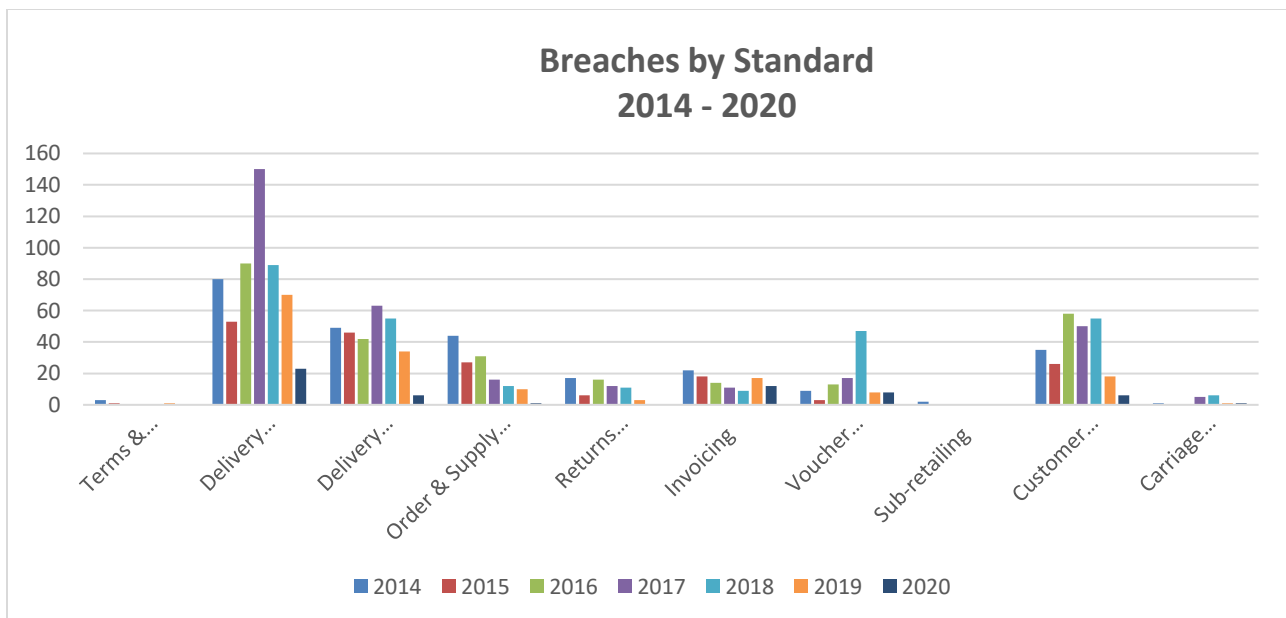
Summary Data

This data represents the result of the PDRP's monitoring of the PDC and its complaints process and provides transparency of performance against key measures of delivery and customer service.

1. Full year comparisons including breakdown by standards.

The table and graph below summarise; totals of Forms completed, Stage 2 breaches, Stage 3 complaints, and breaches by Standard in full year 2014 – 2020.

Year	Forms	Breaches	Stage 3	Breaches by Standard									
				Terms & Conditions	Delivery Timeliness	Delivery Quality	Order & Supply Management	Returns Management	Invoicing	Voucher processing	Sub-retailing	Customer Service	Carriage Charges
2014	159	262	n/a	3	80	49	44	17	22	9	2	35	1
2015	117	180	15	1	53	46	27	6	18	3	0	26	0
2016	167	266	9	0	90	42	31	16	14	13	0	58	0
2017	289	324	22	0	150	63	16	12	11	17	0	50	5
2018	283	284	41	0	89	55	12	11	9	47	0	55	6
2019	153	162	13	1	70	34	10	3	17	8	0	18	1
2020	54	57	3	0	23	6	1	0	12	8	0	6	1



2. Full year breaches by Association

Association	Standard										
	Terms & Conditions	Delivery Timeliness	Delivery Quality	Order & Supply	Returns Management	Invoicing	Voucher Processing	Sub-retailing	Customer Service	Carriage Charges	Total
2020											
Menzies	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
News UK/DTR	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Smiths News	0	5	6	1	0	12	8	0	6	1	39
NMA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PPA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	23	6	1	0	12	8	0	6	1	57
2019											
Menzies	1	20	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	0	28
News UK/DTR	0	12	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	17
Smiths News	0	31	31	7	1	15	8	0	16	1	110
NMA	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
PPA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	70	34	10	3	17	8	0	18	1	162

3. Timeliness of Stage 2

2020

Wholesaler/Publisher	Number of Complaints	Not completed in 28 days	Average time for completion (days)
DTR London	16	0	9.7
Menzies	2	0	1.8
Smiths News	39	1	3.6

2019

Wholesaler/Publisher	Number of Complaints	Not completed in 28 days	Average time for completion (days)
DTR London	17	1	9.5
Menzies	28	3	11.2
Smiths News	110	9	8.1
NMA	7	0	5.5

Appendix 1: 2020 Breaches by wholesale location

Wholesale Location	Standard										Total
	Terms & Conditions	Delivery Timeliness	Delivery Quality	Order & Supply Management	Returns Management	Invoicing	Voucher Processing	Sub-retailing	Customer Service	Carriage Charges	
Birmingham	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Bodmin	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Bow	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bristol	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
DTR London	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Dundee	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Exeter	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Gloucester	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Hammersmith	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Hemel Hempstead	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Hornsey	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Lancing	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Leicester	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Lincoln	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Linwood	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Milton Keynes	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	5
Preston	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
SEL	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sheffield	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Shrewsbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Slough	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Southampton	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Stevenage	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Stockton	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Taunton	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Wakefield	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Worcester	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	0	23	6	1	0	11	9	0	6	1	57

Appendix 1 continued: 2019 Breaches by wholesale location

Wholesale Location	Standard										
	Terms & Conditions	Delivery Timeliness	Delivery Quality	Order & Supply Management	Returns Management	Invoicing	Voucher Processing	Sub-retailing	Customer Service	Carriage Charges	Total
Ashford	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Birmingham	0	7	8	1	0	2	0	0	3	0	21
Bournemouth	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Bristol	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Crawley	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Croydon	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
DTR London	0	12	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	17
Exeter	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Gloucester	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	6
Grays	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hemel Hempstead	0	4	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	9
Hornsey	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hull	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Linwood	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Liverpool	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Maidstone	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Milton Keynes	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	7
Newbridge	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Newcastle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Newmarket	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Newport	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	7
Nottingham	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Oxford	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Peterborough	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Reading	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Redruth	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
SEL	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sheffield	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Shrewsbury	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Slough Total	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Southampton	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Stevenage	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	6
Stockport	0	6	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	12
Stockton	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Stoke	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wakefield	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Wednesbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	5
Worcester	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	4
Yeovil	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
York	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Grand Total	1	70	34	10	3	17	8	0	18	1	162

Appendix 2: Governance

The Press Distribution Review Panel (PDRP) was established to:

- a. Encourage compliance with the Press Distribution Charter (PDC).
- b. Provide comment on compliance issues.
- c. Ensure continuity of arbitration decisions.
- d. Provide an ongoing mechanism for the identification of trends.
- e. Collect, audit and publish data on compliance.

The Charter is backed by a free, fair, fast and reliable complaints process which covers most non-commercial aspects of newspaper and magazine distribution. If a retailer has a complaint about a serious or persistent failure to achieve a PDC standard, there are a number of options that can be used to start the complaints process.

The complaints process is structured under a streamline three stage process that puts greater emphasis on resolving issues locally yet provides a final independent arbitration.

The PDC provides a simple, 3-step process that enables a retailer to raise any issue on the standards and get it resolved efficiently as follows:

Stage 1 – Resolving the issue informally by discussion with the wholesaler.

Stage 2 – If Step 1 is unsuccessful, request a Fast-Track Resolution Form from the wholesaler concerned or the PDF website/Administrator. Complete the form and return it as directed.

Stage 3 – If unsatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 or you think Stage 2 has not been completed by the wholesaler within a reasonable time, the PDF Administrator can be requested to refer the complaint to an independent Arbitrator for final adjudication.

Membership of the Press Distribution Review Panel 2019

The PDRP members for the year under review were:

Brian Murphy (NFRN/ Independent Retailer)
Graham Read (Independent Retailer)
Paresh Vyas (Independent Retailer)
Fiona Campbell (Menzies Distribution)
Alison Morris (Smiths News)
Ayk Tahir (NMA)
Trevor Hudson (PPA)
Steve Cripwell (Independent Chairman)

Linda Windsor (PDRP Administrator)

Independent Arbitrator

Neil Robinson